

2 Peter 2

Read 2 Peter 2:1-3: An increase in false prophets, as well as a false messiah is predicted to come at the end times.

...the disciples came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" ⁴ Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. ⁵ For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and will deceive many. (Matthew 24:3-5)

...command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer ⁴ or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. Such things promote controversial speculations rather than advancing God's work—which is by faith. ⁵ The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. ⁶ Some have departed from these and have turned to meaningless talk. ⁷ They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm. (1 Timothy 1:3-7)

What is a false prophet? It is somebody who tells the people what they want to hear. They do not correct bad behavior. It is to pander to an audience. It is to encourage immediate satisfaction and put people at ease. They are not too different than some politicians.

For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. ⁴ They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. (1 Timothy 4:3-4)

There have been phony televangelists for years. Here we are talking about false teachings that gain traction worldwide. Regardless, people will be in big trouble for following their lusts instead of the truth.

Instead, we are instructed to be solid in the fundamentals of the faith. We are to become experts on the scriptures.

Keep reminding God's people of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen. ¹⁵ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. ¹⁶ Avoid godless

chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. ¹⁷ Their teaching will spread like gangrene. (2 Timothy 2 14-17)

Paul gave us a good example, when he described the Berean church.

Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. (Acts 17:11)

Read 2 Peter 2:4-10: God will not spare his greatest creations, or his lowest creations from judgement. He will not grade on a curve; or follow the popular culture. People are lulled into believing that *there is no way that all of these people could be wrong*. Peter gives us some examples of these heavy truths.

Certain demons did not confine their activity to the limits that God had required. They are currently in hell; until the great tribulation. Currently, the demons can go back and forth from earth to heaven. They have no desire to worship God; but they do have to show up for roll call and reporting to God.

One day the angels^[a] came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan^[b] also came with them. ⁷ The LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the LORD, "From roaming throughout the earth, going back and forth on it." (Job 1:6-7)

Satan is currently making trips from earth to heaven, to accuse us before God's throne. He is like a corrupt District Attorney. He studies our deep motivations and weaknesses. Then he weakens us and baits us. Then he reports our moral failures to God. Perhaps he is incensed that such weak beings have acceptance; while he is rejected.

For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. (Revelation 12:10)

During the tribulation the Devil and his demons will no longer have access to heaven. They will be kicked out for good.

Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. ⁸ But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. ⁹ The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. (Revelation 12:7-9)

The Devil has never been to hell. He is smart enough to let his followers take the fall. The Devil will be grabbed by another angel and dragged down to hell; and he will be chained for 1,000 years. He has on power there. All of the things we hear about evil originating in hell is a bit confused. Hell is a prison; guarded by Gods holy angels.

A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives its mark on their forehead or on their hand, ¹⁰ they, too, will drink the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. They will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. (Revelation 14:9-10)

The point is that it does not matter if you are an angel or a person. God will collar you. God is committed to a certain plan and outcome. Sodom and Gomorrah is a warning to San Francisco and other places where the gospel has been ignored; out of a desire for another lifestyle. We are told of fire and brimstone coming down on all of the inhabitants there; once righteous Lot was out of harm's way. Lot is a picture of an end-times saint who is vexed by the sin which surrounds him. It is an illustration of a camouflaged righteous man who narrowly-escapes the destruction of hell.

God has made sure that we do not dismiss the reality of judgement. Sodom and Gomorrah stand as a memorial. It was a beautiful and verdant garden-like area; that has been disinfected with fire and salt. Likewise, The worldwide flood is undeniable. The only-evil inhabitants were everywhere. The entire surface area of the earth had to be cleaned of sinners; without ruining the earth. People who think that God could not possibly wipe out massive populations are wrong.

"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. ¹⁴ But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it. (Matthew 7:13-14)

Lot and Noah are both pictures of end-times believers. They were around, right up to the time of destruction. Noah was lifted up (like the rapture). He was called to step out of a world that had nothing left for him. Lot was surrounded by sin and warped minds.

Read 2 Peter 2:11-16: Peter points out how angels see God's power more clearly than we do. Their power and ability is far beyond ours. Holy angels are seen to

be our protectors, God's angels do not pronounce judgements. They carry out arrest warrants. One difference between Holy angels and demons is knowing their place and role. Demons accuse us. They act as self-appointed judges. Being a holy angel requires a lot of restraint and admiration of God's ways of doing things.

A self-willed person who lives for themselves is somewhat like an unreasoning animal. Their desire for an outcome supersedes their logic. They do not seem to consider the consequences for their actions. They respond to their impulses and appetites, like a dog.

But their idols are silver and gold, made by human hands. ⁵They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see. ⁶They have ears, but cannot hear, noses, but cannot smell. ⁷They have hands, but cannot feel, feet, but cannot walk, nor can they utter a sound with their throats. ⁸Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them. (Psalm 115:4-8)

An evil man is compared to an animal who was made to be caught and killed (like a wolf). They cannot be tamed; and they are a menace.

*What if God, although choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath—prepared for destruction?
(Romans 9:22)*

An evil man has trained his own heart to entertain anything; and to draw in others to join the fun. There are people who are amidst the church; who are full of evil desire. Walking according to our calling is more than receiving Jesus as your Lord and savior. You have to die to your selfish passions. We say "no" to those dark ideas.

For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:3)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.^[a] The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Balaam is cited as an example of one who knew about God; yet he kept the door of personal opportunity open. God told him to steer clear of antisemitism; but Balaam kept entertaining and pursuing these opportunities to gain for himself.

Read 2 Peter 2:17-22: There are those who have a lot of knowledge of the truth; but their heart is not in it. It represents an obligation or societal boundary to them. Pastor's kids can be like that.

Many of us have had times in the past where certain types of sins controlled us. Once you become a Christian you need to get very serious about sin and be

ruthless in our self-control with any remnant of those desires. Being saved is like running for our life into God's hands. There is no thought of site seeing in the old haunts. A drug addict or person addicted to pornography are examples of a deeply-imbedded dark patterns. They are a nearly-impossible bondage to break. There are mental, emotional and physical bonds that are hard to shut down. Certain sins are so alluring; that you need to *build your fences* miles away. The Christian who even knowingly walks into the vicinity of past allurements is acting like a fool. This is an area where legalism over what you allow for yourself can serve a purpose.

Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall. (Proverbs 16:18)

These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come. ¹² So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! (1 Corinthians 10:11-12)

False prophets and teachers have the appearance of being providers of immediate comfort. Their message frequently has no call to sacrifice or personal conviction of sin. If there is a sacrifice, it is of our choosing. Their message is frequently that everything will be OK. Their misdirection reinforces those who want to deal with God on their own terms. The Bible is called a sword; because its contents hurt when taken in personally. The Bible offends us; and tells us that we are going the wrong way. False prophets tell us that we are going the right way; and that everything will be OK.

The judgement awaiting a false teacher or false prophet is greater than a garden-variety sinner. They know the truth; and they twist it to their advantage.

But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked. (Luke 12:48)

I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll. ¹⁹ And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll. (Revelation 22:18-19)